PHINEAS HARDEN'S INHERITANCE

THEY stood about the farmhouse in awkward, constrained groups, waiting, as they might have expressed it, "for the funeral to start." The dead woman was lying in the best room. It had been the passing away of a hard life.

Phineas Harden leaned his head against the shutter which had been closed to keep out the glaring light, and as he sat there, half-hearing the sounds which came to him through the open window, he heard quite distinctly these words:

"Died peaceful at the last, they say. Well, there'd ought ter be some peace in the course of a natural life, an' if there was going ter be any in old Mis' Harden's life, guess it had ter get its innings in at pretty nigh the last lick, an' a close shave at that. My, didn't she lead Dick Harden a life. Rec'lect when there wasn't a sprucer man in town, but she took the spirit out of him, an' it warn't much of a job fer consumption ter finish him up."

Phineas never forgot that. It had been the putting into words what he had never quite admitted even to himself.

The days that followed his mother's death passed peacefully enough. After a while he became used to the quiet of the house. It didn't seem lonely to him; he had never felt lonely, not even at the first. It was only as though some discordant note had dropped out of his life.

People sometimes looked curiously at him and wondered if he ever thought of Lorinda North. But no one could read the thoughts that were hidden back of his eyes. They were eyes that rather baffled you; they had always annoyed his mother. When he was a child she had said one day, "Where he gets that look beats me. He minds well, an' he'd oughter, seein' the trouble I've been to, bringing him up. His hands an' feet are quick enough to do as I say, but I can't feel but what

"HE LONGED FOR QUIET AND PEACE."

there's somethin' back of his eyes that I ain't never touched."

Lorinda North kept a little shop, which was the local exponent of metropolitan styles. She was a woman who took life hard. It did not come easy to any of these hard-worked, narrow-lived women, and she had fought against each hard knock until all the softness, which may once have been hers, had been rubbed off. There had been an old love affair between these two, but how far it had progressed no one ever quite knew. Some one had once ventured to ask Lorinda about it. "She wasn't going to be an old woman's nurse," she had said. "She'd always made out to make a living for herself, and she guessed she could still. She wasn't going to live in any man's house and have another woman boss it."

Perhaps in these years in which there had been plenty of time for quiet thought she had sometimes regretted her lost chance of happiness. Surely they had been lonely years, hard years, too, and they had borne their fruit in Lorinda North. There wasn't a woman in the town who did not feel a little uneasy when under the battery of her sharp eyes. Phineas Harden had been the only one who had ever pushed open, even ever so slightly, the door of her heart; and after she had closed this little chink, love had gone to easier pathways, and left the door of Lorinda's heart closed hard and fast.

People had speculated somewhat as to how she would take the news of Mrs. Harden's death. Perhaps it had stirred, more deeply than she knew, the undercurrent of her life. Surely, Phineas was often in her mind in these days. Not with any tenderness of feeling did she think of the lonely man; but perhaps because his solitary life bore so closely on her own did her thoughts so often turn to him. As she looked forward, as she did sometimes of late, to the years and years stretching out their weary length before her, a thought, which was at first vague and undefined, gradually took definite shape in her mind.

They had both always been regular church attendants. Through the summer Lorinda had sat just back of Phineas Harden's pew, and the time seemed very long ago when the pew in front had been empty at the evening meeting and he had sat back with her.

His mother had been dead just six months. The cold and dreariness of the winter was gone, and it was a soft night in early June. The windows in the old church were open, and perhaps Phineas listened more to the monotonous voice of the minister. When he was a little boy he had often wished that they would have church outdoors. God seemed nearer there. The woman sat and watched his face during the long sermon. She looked at it more carefully, perhaps, than she had ever done before. But Lorinda North was not capable of seeing the real Phineas Harden. All she saw was a slight, bent figure; a face with eyes that were apt to fall a little before the hard look in her own. She could not know that he did not meet her eyes only because it pained him to see the expression which time had printed on her face.

The long service was over, and there was a sigh of relief as the congregation stood and received the benediction. Phineas had never passed out of his pew without stopping and speaking to Lorinda. To-night he looked up with his usual smile; she was just beside him, her hand resting on the railing of the old pew that stood between them. Something in her face arrested him; he stopped and took her hand.

"What is it, Lorinda? Is anything the matter?"

She looked for a full minute into his kind, inquiring eyes before she spoke.

"No, nothing's the matter. I only thought that, perhaps—perhaps, we might walk home together."

He dropped her hand, and the color flashed to his face. But the blood moves more slowly at forty than at twenty, and he only said:

"Why, yes, Lorinda, of course."

The night was clear and beautiful. It was strange how the man noted each sound, and how his thoughts went back to another June night long ago, when he had walked over this same road with the woman beside him. He looked at her face; even in this soft half-light, it was hard and cold. There was something pathetic in the silent walk of these two old lovers. They were almost at her door now, and she turned her face toward him. If he could have known it, there were two bright spots on her cheeks; as it was, he felt a great pity for the lonely woman. He did not know that they were two players in "the tragedy of what might have been," but he dimly felt that she was trying to bridge over the lapse of time that had come between them. He remembered something of the feeling he had once had when she was beside him, and a wave of longing, not for her, but for the love that had gone, came over him. He almost forgot the woman in his remembrance of the love which she had once awakened.

As the memory of the old emotions came over him his heart softened and he turned toward her with ready words on his lips. But they had reached her door, and she was holding out her hand.

"Good-night, Phineas. I haven't any idea but that you think strange of what I've done to-night, but whatever you think I know I can trust you to keep still. Perhaps there's things we all regret. I don't know how you feel, but——" She had opened the door now and had stepped just within the shop—"but I won't be busy Saturday night, and if you want to come I'll be at home." And before he had time to answer, the door had been shut and he was alone.

It had been a hot week for so early in the season. Phineas felt tired and spent as he drove home from town on Saturday afternoon. As he neared his house its loneliness struck him as something new. The heat of the day, and his struggles with the question which he had been evading, and which kept him calling for an answer, depressed him. He longed for quiet and peace; whether the old quiet life or the possible peace of a new one, he did not know. But his house was not so lonely, after all; for, as he came nearer, he saw the old doctor's sulky beside the gate. He had always liked the cheerful, sensible old man, and he hailed him now with even a note of relief in his voice:

"Hello, Phineas; thought you'd be along if I waited a minute."

Phineas got out and stood by the side of the doctor's sulky.

"It's about the bill, I s'pose," he said. "I meant to see about it before, but——"

"See here, Phineas Harden, did you ever know me to drive people on my bills? It isn't a bill this time, but something that I ought to have attended to as soon as your mother died, but it clean slipped my mind, and that's the only excuse I have to offer. I don't know whether you've ever thought much about your father; he died when you were pretty young. He was one of the best friends I ever had. They said he died of consumption; I said so myself, and I suppose he did; but if ever a man died of loneliness and want of sympathy it was Dick Harden. Just before he died he gave me a letter to give you. He told me to keep it as long as your mother lived, and at her death to give it to you if you were still unmarried; so, since you're a blooming old bachelor like myself, here it is. And whatever is in it, just remember that your father was a good man, and lived better than most men die."

In the afterglow of the sunset Phineas sat turning the letter over in his hand. The fading light was too dim for the faint, indistinct writing, and he lighted the lamp.

He looked at the date and it gave him a curious feeling to know that his father had been younger than he himself was when he had written the letter. It was true that he had thought of his father but little, and perhaps nothing in his life had ever touched him as did this letter, which seemed as real to him as though it were his father's voice coming down to him through the years.

The writing was stiff and cramped. He read the lines again and again, seeing his father through each word:

To My Dear Son—Whether you will ever see this I cannot tell. When life is almost ended, some things seem very clear. I cannot leave you much, but perhaps you will some time understand. There is only just enough to take care of your mother. I wish, God only knows how I wish, that I could leave you happiness. Lying here I've had time to think it all over, and I am leaving this letter with the prayer that God will somehow make it do the work.

There is just one thing I want to say. Be sure of yourself. Never make friends because you are lonely. There is no loneliness like that of a heart that cannot get back to itself. Perhaps you will know what I mean; if you don't, it won't make any difference anyway. I leave you my dying blessing. Your father,

RICHARD HARDEN.

The evening hours wore slowly away. When her little, restless clock struck nine, Lorinda North blew out the light in her sitting-room. Phineas Harden had not come.—The Springfield Republican.

PUNISHED THE PAINTINGS.

They Violated Editor Storey's Cast Iron Rule and Were Hanged.

"When we went to Chicago to live just after the fire," said a woman who has since returned to New York, "we furnished the house with all that was necessary to make it attractive. One winter my husband bought a number of paintings, and after they had been placed properly we invited a clever young woman to come in and see the collection. I don't mind telling you that she wrote for Mr. Storey's newspaper, The Times. She understood art. She had been reared in Boston and she had studied abroad.

"When the article on our collection appeared, what was our horror to read that each picture described had been 'hanged' by a man who made a specialty of putting up paintings. My husband was teased into a fit of neuralgia the next day by his Chicago acquaintances, who expressed their regret that all his paintings had been executed. Of course the women heard of it and there was a giggle for blocks.

"I called upon the young woman from Boston and asked how she had made such a blunder. She was in an agonized frame of mind and protested that she didn't write it 'hanged.' I was sure she didn't. Then came the explanation. A few weeks before there had been an execution in the Chicago jail and Mr. Storey's reporters wrote that the man was 'hung.' Mr. Storey was furious and issued an order, so I heard, that henceforth editors, reporters, copy readers, printers and proofreaders must write and set up and read 'hanged' for 'hung.' The rule was inflexible. The young woman who wrote of our collection used the word 'hung' throughout her article and Mr. Storey's rule was enforced. But as long as we lived in Chicago we were always known as 'that New York family who had their paintings executed.'"—New York Sun.

The Mayor Who Couldn't Spell "If."

During the several terms that Tim Campbell served in congress he was always prominent before the house. One of his colleagues from Manhattan was Colonel Jack Adams, who, a lawyer, while he and Mr. Campbell were in congress together spent most of his time working off practical jokes at the expense of the east side statesman. Tim had been in and out of Tammany Hall several times, those changes depending on whether his claims were recognized or repudiated.

A very hot political canvass found Tim one of the stanchest adherents of the Hall. Colonel Jack had had a falling out with the powers and was just as strong on the other side. Tim took this very much to heart, as his admiration for his fellow congressman was very strong. He concluded that, where all others had failed to bring Colonel Jack back into the fold, he (Tim) could succeed.

"Now, Jack," Tim said insinuatingly, "what do you want to go and fight the mayor for? Sure, he's a fine young fellow, bright and enterprising and one of the best educated men in America."

"Educated!" exclaimed Colonel Jack contemptuously. "Educated, did you say?"

"Sure, he's one of the very best educated young fellows in this city."

"Educated!" reiterated Adams, putting an extra dose of contempt into his voice. "What would you say, Tim, if I told you that he was so little educated that he spells 'if' with only one 'f'?"

"Does he do that?" responded Tim in a heartbroken tone.

"He does."

"Well, then, I have nothing further to say. I don't blame you."—Saturday Evening Post.

Dartmoor Superstitions.

In no part of England is superstition so rife as in the west of England, and especially so on that tract of barren land known as Dartmoor. One angler who had great luck on the river Dart discovered this last year. He made a big catch, but it was made on Easter Sunday. It consisted of 56 trout, the largest 1½ pounds and three of one pound each, besides several of half a pound, a phenomenal catch for the upper Dart. When he tried to have some cooked at the farmhouse where he was staying, the old moorland cook refused to have anything to do with them, deeming them "devil's fish" or "vishe," as she pronounced it.

Another superstition is that if one picks a piece of broom while fishing that one will assuredly be drowned before the day is out.

It is general for the moormen when doing a quiet poach when the streams are in flood to spit on their first worm for luck. It is thought unlucky to look into the water before making a cast. The most curious superstition is that if one is fishing and for some time catches nothing some one is wishing him ill, and the only way to counteract the "ill wishing" is to kneel or "sit on your knees," as they say on Dartmoor, and bite off the top of a young bracken fern. The fish then will be found to bite with most peculiar and surprising avidity.

Was Ready to Compromise.

A very small pile of coal lay on the sidewalk in front of a house on A street southeast. A correspondingly small son of Ham was sauntering along and, seeing it, scented a job. He rang the doorbell.

"Am dat yo' all's coal?" he asked the lady at the door.

"Yes."

"Want it toted in?"

"Yes."

"Kain't I git de job?"

"Why, you're pretty small, and then you might charge too much. You might ask more than I could pay."

"How much is yo' got?" asked the small man of business. "Kin yo' raise a dollah?"

"Oh, my goodness, no!"

"Seventy-five cents?"

"No; run along and don't bother me." And she started to close the door.

"Mebbe so yo'll gib 50 cents."

"No, no; run along."

"I reckons yo' all ain't got er qua'tah?"

"No."

"Ner a dime?"

"No, not even a dime," replied the woman, beginning to laugh.

"Well, how much is yo' got?" questioned Ham, showing his ivories. "I sut'nly does wanter git de job."

"I've got just a nickel."

"Well, I'm jus' a-lookin fer nickel jobs." And he straightway began.—Washington Star.

Science AND Invention

The French roller boat built by M. Bazin has been broken up at Preston, England, after being exhibited for some time as a curiosity. Her construction was most intricate and the amount of metal used enormous.

A commission has been appointed to examine into the rapid death of the elm trees in New Haven, and it is found the trees are dying from lack of plant food in the streets, multilation by horses, poisoning by illuminating gas and by insects and elm tree beetles. Some time ago an attempt was made to attribute the death of trees to stray electric currents.

During the eclipse of the sun in May, 1900, an English observer, Mr. Evershed, as reported at a recent meeting of the Royal Astronomical Society, noticed a point on the edge of the moon where the sun was shining through a very deep valley, and where the lunar mountains seemed to be about 35,000 feet in altitude. This exceeds by 6,000 feet the estimated height of Mount Everest, the loftiest mountain on the earth. The edge of the moon is so broken by peaks, ridges and valleys that the length of totality during a solar eclipse is affected by them.

American peanut crops average about 5,000,000 bushels a year, and twenty-two pounds of the nuts make a bushel. About $10,000,000 worth of peanuts yearly are consumed, either in their natural form or in candy. Vast quantities of peanuts are shipped each year to Great Britain and the continent from both Africa and Asia, where they are converted into "pure Lucca olive oil." A bushel of peanut shells will afford about a gallon of oil, and the meal is used for feeding horses, and is also baked into a variety of bread which has a large sale in Germany and France.

Value of the collections in the "gold room" of the Metropolitan Museum of Art is estimated at $500,000, and they are protected by a most admirable series of burglar alarms. Visitors are carefully watched, and the rooms are constantly patrolled both day and night. Each individual object which is valuable is connected with a burglar alarm, as well as the cases themselves. The wires run direct to the office of the director, and if any article is disturbed the iron doors of the room are at once closed, thus catching the thief in a trap. The device is tested at intervals to make sure that the door-closing mechanism is in perfect order.

Prof. John Milne says that upon knowledge derived from the scientific study of earthquakes new rules and formulae for engineers and builders have been established, and these principles have been widely applied in Japan and other countries, thereby minimizing the loss of life and property. Such studies have also been of practical use in the working of railways, especially in Japan, by localizing faults in the rocks and sugesting alterations in the balancing of locomotives. Another advantage gained relates to ocean cables, as it has become possible to indicate parts of the sea-bottom that should be avoided in laying such cables.

Differences in taste depend simply on the varying intensity in nerve transmission, according to Dr. Mendelsohn, and are much affected by temperature. The sense of taste for cane sugar is temporarily destroyed by holding the tongue for a minute in water at about 125 degrees F. Cold, on the other hand, has the same effect, all power of taste being lost for a brief time after the tongue has been held in water at 35 degrees to 50 degrees. Taste is strongest between 50 degrees and 70 degrees. This is also the temperature at which beverages are most effective, and water at about 60 degrees is really the best for relieving thirst, instead of, as is usually supposed, that at about 40 degrees.

CREDULITY OF THE WOMEN.

Are Prone to Believe the Yarns Designing Men Spin for Them.

It seems strange that young women will trust themselves to men about whom they know practically nothing and that their parents do not make a more rigid investigation into the antecedent life of the suitors for the hand of their daughters. The latest disaster resulting from feminine credulity and parental carelessness has befallen Miss Emma Seaman of Brooklyn, who was married to Charles Telfor Smith about six weeks ago and on Tuesday discovered that he had a wife and a babe in New Rochelle and that she was not a wife at all. The plight of this young girl—she is only 18 years old—is pitiable. Her dream of happiness is ended. The young man with a fine presence and taking manners who talked about his wealth had impressed her and she had married him while on a visit to Utica, where he had followed her. And now she learns that he is a scoundrel who betrayed her.

It is not surprising that she should have been impressed by the young man or that she should have been little inquisitive about him. Young women are not in the habit of thinking that the men who propose marriage to them have wives already. Their confidence and their trust in the goodness of the world are too great for that. They know that bigamy is a crime and they do not think that a man of good manners will deliberately be guilty of violation of the law, much less be guilty of the greater offense against the innocence of unsuspecting virtue. But the parents are not unsophisticated. If they have lived long enough to have marriageable daughters they must know that there are scoundrels in the world and that it is easy for a villain to pass himself off as a saint for a short time in a large city. It is notorious that there is no better place for a man to hide than in a crowd and a man can conceal not only himself from his pursuers, but he can move from one part of the town to another and his new associates will know nothing about his character and will make few if any inquiries. Indeed, he can live with one wife in the city and woo another woman and marry her without either victim knowing anything about the other.

One would think that the parents would seek to know who the men are that seek their daughters in marriage. It would seem as if they would not only learn something about the manner of life of the wooer, but would also find out something about his family and about what that family thinks of the proposed union. Under proper circumstances a marriage between the children of two families results in the acquaintance at least of the parents by an interchange of letters if in no other way. Where the daughter is overtaken by such disaster as has just come upon the young woman whom Smith induced to marry him her parents cannot escape some of the responsibility for what happens. A young woman's life is too precious a thing to be intrusted to the first plausible stranger who asks for her hand. But from recent events one must conclude that this has been forgotten in Brooklyn.—Brooklyn Eagle.

Woman's Unique School in China.

While not many miles away the Boxer fanatics were murdering missionaries and converts, Mrs. Annetta Thompson Mills, who is at the head of the only school for deaf mutes in China, was living in perfect safety at Cheerfoo, with natives of all classes and beliefs ready to come to her assistance in a minute. Mrs. Mills, who formerly lived in Chicago, has been in charge of this unique school ever since the death of her husband, Dr. Mills, who died in 1895. The school itself is fourteen years old, and is entirely a private enterprise, never having received the aid of any of the various missionary boards. Before Dr. and Mrs. Mills began their work in China deaf and dumb people were looked upon as outcasts, who were punished in that way for some crime, and were treated even by their parents with great cruelty. Even to-day the Mills school is the only place in the great empire of 400,000,000 people where such unfortunates can be properly educated. Contributions for the support of the school are received from all over the world, and the Chinese people themselves are contributing more and more to its support.

MRS. MILLS.

Social Mistakes.

Perhaps the greatest of all social mistakes is to be continually talking about one's self. There is no word in all the vocabulary of conversation so tedious to others as that personal pronoun "I." Though one of the smallest words in use, there is none that takes up more room in the every-day world. "I" is a bore; it is better not to mention his name oftener than can be avoided. Another social folly is "gush." There is an insincere ring about it. True, there are people who gush from sheer good nature in wishing to give pleasure, yet they should remember that even amiable exaggeration is like a coarse sugar plum, agreeable at first, but leaving a doubtful taste in the mouth afterward. On the other hand, there is a certain class of people in society who are equally foolish in going to the other extreme. They feign indifference about everybody and everything, seldom expressing either interest or admiration. They think it "bad form" to show any pleasure in life, and a sign of superiority to be incapable of enthusiasm. A social folly is to imagine that people are always looking at or thinking of you. Such ideas are often the offspring of conceit. As a matter of fact, people very often look at you without seeing or thinking of you. They have other things to think of. If we could only convince ourselves that we are not always the pivot of our friends' and acquaintances' thoughts there would be fewer hurt feelings and imaginary grievances.

The Wife's Pocketbook.

"The average American husband does not seem to be able to get it through his well-meaning but halting mind that nothing on God's earth humiliates a wife more than to be compelled to ask her husband for money," writes Edward Bok in the Ladies' Home Journal. "She instinctively hesitates to do it, and oftentimes she goes without rather than ask. Every wife should be given all that it is possible for the husband to allow for household expenses, and it should not be doled out to her in driblets nor given to her as a favor; but as her right, and without question. Over such a share she should have independent sway to do with as she sees fit for the wisest interests of her home and children. That is one rightful step. But there is still another. She should have an allowance of her own apart from the family share of the income. I have no hesitation in saying that if the truth were known it is just this humiliating dependence upon a man for every little trifle that a woman needs that is making thousands of women restless and anxious for outside careers. This is the only fair excuse I have ever been able to see for the hysterical rantings of the modern advanced woman. In that particular she is right and is absolutely justified in filing a protest. A wife is too great and important a factor in the life of her husband to be made a financial dependent."

Excuses Given by Looters.

The Russian papers contain comical stories of the effects of the Russian ministerial order against looting in China. A private soldier hauled before the provost marshal with some valuable gauze ornaments in his possession pleaded that he meant them as a gift for the Vladivostock museum. He got off, and a few days later his escape placed the military judges in a farcical dilemma probably without precedent. A man had been caught with a live Chinese hen in his haversack and he, too, pleaded that he had thought of sending his prize to the museum. The papers aver that this culprit also was permitted to escape.

How does it happen that all milliners come from New York, Chicago or Paris?

A favorite way to praise a man is to abuse his kin for imposing upon him.

So many people, when you hear about them, sound well.

OUR FLOUR IN CHINA.

ITS USE BECOMING MORE COMMON AMONG CELESTIALS.

They Find It More Economical than Their Own Food Products—They Consume It Mostly in the Shape of Boiled or Steamed Dishes.

The Chinese are learning to use flour. With them it is largely an acquired taste. Americans are encouraging the habit, and it is very likely that as China grows more prosperous the consumption will greatly increase. That will give American flour merchants a very big field for business.

In the two years ending with 1899 the imports of flour into China more than trebled. In 1897 the value of flour taken there was $809,192.88. In 1899 it had grown to $2,054,891.94.

Henry B. Miller, United States consul at Chun-King, reports to the government that wherever flour has been introduced into China there has been such rapid increase in the demand and in the consumption as to give an assurance of a continued and growing market for it in all sections where the cost of transportation does not bar its use. With the development of China will come improved conditions with the Chinese and a demand for better and more diversified food.

In all Chinese cities a very large percentage of the population lives in a sort of hand-to-mouth fashion. The great necessity for economy in fuel seems to be the primary cause of this mode of living. Throughout central and southern China very little baked bread is used. The flour is consumed in the form of dough or dumplings, filled with chopped meat or meat and vegetables and fruit.

The flour is made into dough and then beaten into a leathery substance. It is then pressed into thin sheets and cut into strings, boiled and thus eaten, or else made into dumplings and steamed. In nearly every case it is eaten while hot. Foreign flour is also used quite extensively in cakes and Chinese confections. The Chinese appetite seems to demand boiled or steamed food, rather than bakes; hence very little bread is baked for Chinese consumption.

Foreign flour does not come into actual competition with rice, and, of course, cannot altogether take its place with the great rice-eating population of China, but it furnishes a cheap variety of food. The merchants, mechanics and coolies in all the treaty ports of China get better incomes than those of the interior, and are able to add a little variety to their food, and are becoming consumers of foreign flour.

Wheat is grown to some extent in nearly every section of China, but more extensively throughout the northern and western than in the central and southern portions. In the north and west it is used very generally for food. The grain is ground in small stone mills, operated by hand or animal power.

The Chinese use vegetable growths for fuel, among them tall millet. If they take to using coal a great area of country now given up to tall millet will no doubt be used for wheat growing. It is not a fact that the limit of agricultural and horticultural resources of China have been reached. On account of the primitive methods of milling modern flour mills have been constructed there by Caucasians. One at Tien-Tsin was destroyed by the "boxers." There are two at Shanghai.

The consumption of flour in China, says Consul Miller, indicates a good future market for American flour and flouring mill machinery, as well as employment for skilled Americans in the construction and operation of flour mills. The conservative character of the people when it comes to a change in methods is such that it seems perfectly safe to predict that the demand for flour for many years to come will be far ahead of the local production. The ability of the United States to place flour cheaply in all the great coast cities gives assurance of an extensive and permanent trade between our country and the Orient.

CHEATED OUT OF THE CLAIM.

Successful Trick of Quartet of Land-Booming Swindlers.

"Many things occurred during the opening and settlement of the Cherokee strip in Oklahoma in 1893, the like of which had never been seen or heard," said a Joplin printer, who was mixed up in the race at the opening, and secured a number of town lots at Pawnee. "I remember a young fellow who came down to Perry from Iowa and staked out a nice corner lot. And, by the way, merely staking out a claim did not give one the complete right of possession. You had to sit down on it and hold it fast, and the Iowa chap was a stayer. He ate his meals on the lot and rolled himself in a blanket and slept on it at night. Unscrupulous schemers were ever present, beating the unwary out of their claims. But the Iowa man held his base and played safe.

"One night four men silently approached the sleeper. They carried a tent, a table and four seats. They quietly erected the tent over the Iowa man, got out a deck of cards and began playing seven up," quotes the Joplin, Mo., News-Herald. "The Iowa man slept on. After awhile one of the players gave him a poke in the ribs with his foot. The man in the blanket awoke, rubbed his eyes and stared about inquiringly, and in a very much bewildered manner. "What the —— are you doing here, young fellow?" demanded the man who had kicked him. 'Why—why—I don't exactly know,' faltered the Iowan, as he extricated himself from the blanket. 'I—I must have been walking in my sleep.' 'Right sure you ain't trying to steal this lot from me?' demanded the other, scowling in a threatening manner at the Iowan. 'No, sir; I am not. I had no tent or anything on my lot and I do not wish to beat you out of this claim.' 'I believe you're lying to me, young feller, an' I'm a great mind to fix you right now, but I won't. If you will hold up your right hand in the presence of these three men and swear this is not your lot and that you will not try to claim it an' make trouble, I'll let you off this time. Some of you guys are too —— tricky to live in this neighborhood, anyway. What do you say?'

"'Gentlemen, I swear this is not my lot and that I will make no claim on it whatever,' said the Iowan, with uplifted hand. 'That's enough. Now hit the grit.' The young man gathered up his blanket and departed. He spent the rest of the night trying to find his choice corner lot. The day broke and the sun arose, but he was yet unsuccessful in locating it. The men in the tent threw up a shack, opened a saloon and did a thriving business on the corner lot, and in a few days the Iowan traded his Winchester for a lame mule and sorrowfully rode out of the territory."

GOOD Short Stories

The late Ignatius Donnelly was once rudely interrupted in the course of a political speech by a head of cabbage thrown from the audience. "Gentlemen," he said, mildly, "I only asked your ears; I don't care for your heads."

Years ago, when Bret Harte, fresh from the Pacific slope, heard the list of famous men living at Cambridge, he said to Mr. Howells: "Why, you couldn't fire a revolver from your front porch anywhere without bringing down a two-volumer!"

An interesting story is being told of Queen Alexandra, which is typical of the woman. Some one at Osborne addressed her as "your majesty" the day after Queen Victoria passed away. "There cannot be two queens," she remarked, adding that she wished to be called "her royal highness" until after the funeral of Queen Victoria.

Two rival manufacturers of French coffee met before a judge. The latter took up one of the contestants' empty tins, and said: "I do not consider this an honest label. On the front you place in large letters, 'Pure French Coffee,' and on the back in small letters—in very small letters—you print, 'A Compound of Chicory,' etc." The person thus addressed mused for a moment. Then he said, quite meekly: "But will your lordship kindly explain to the jury by what means you distinguish between the front and the back of a round tin?"

Queen Victoria was fortunate in having as her first prime minister and constitutional tutor in one, Lord Melbourne. That statesman's profanity—characterisitc of the age when everybody damned everybody's eyes—and other personal peculiarities have loomed so large in story and legend as to obscure the real sagacity and accomplishments of the man. Perhaps his sharpest collision with her was on the point of the title which her husband, Prince Albert, was to be given. The Queen strongly wished the prince to be made king consort by act of Parliament. Melbourne evaded the issue as long as possible, but her majesty finally insisted upon a categorical answer. "I thought it my duty to be very plain with her," said the premier afterward; "I said, 'For God's sake, let's hear no more of it, ma'am; for if you once get the English people into the way of making kings, you will get them into the way of unmaking them.'"

One night Hon. William D. Faulke, in a speech before a small meeting in Indiana, when James D. Williams and Benjamin Harrison were opposing candidates for the governorship, related the following story: "Mr. Williams, who was then a member of Congress, was one day washing his hands at one of the lavatories in the Capitol, when an attendant handed him three towels. He sighed at such wanton extravagance, and exclaimed: 'Why, down at my farm I make a single towel last the whole family a week.'" In the East this was considered a good story, but Mr. Faulke was astonished to see that there was not a smile upon any of the faces before him; indeed, the countenances took on even a deeper gloom. On his way home, as they drove through the woods, his companion said to him: "You didn't make a great hit with your story about 'Blue Jeans'' family towel." "No, I didn't seem to." "Do you know why?" "No." "Well, I'll tell you. There wasn't a farmer in that crowd that hadn't done the same thing himself."

Big Price for Old Carpets.

When a carpet gets to be half a century or more old you usually expect to be able to pick it up for a song—perhaps a song of a few sixpences—in some second-hand shop, but sometimes you will find yourself mistaken, which would have been the case had you been at a recent second-hand carpet sale in Lisbon. Two carpets sold there were four and a half centuries old, and yet they were not bought for rags. They were carpets presented by the Infanta Donna Sancha to the Royal Convent of St. Antonio in 1500, and were put up at auction to raise money with which to repair the convent. French and German bidders were the most anxious, and the carpets were started at $4,400. A Frenchman finally got them for $8,500, and was congratulated on his bargain.

Languages Spoken by Army Officers.

The Army and Navy Journal states that 304 commissioned officers of the regular army speak Spanish fluently, and that most of these are serving in the Philippines and the West Indies. About as many more officers possess a limited knowledge of Spanish. French is spoken by 224 officers, German by 136, the language of the American Indians by 13, Italian by 3, Swedish and Norwegian by 4, and Tagalog by 5. Chinese, Japanese, Eskimo, Dutch, Hungarian, Portuguese, and Polish are also spoken by some of our army officers.

Tulip Festival.

Tulips are cultivated in Constantinople, and there is a tulip festival there once a year in spring. Every palace, room, gallery and garden is decorated with tulips of every kind. At night they are all lighted by colored lamps and Bengal fires, and the Sultan sits in their midst, while women sing around him and his odalisques dance before him.